SURVEY OF EARLY CHRISTIAN HISTORY
THEO 521

Tuesdays 3:45-6:00
HUMANITIES BUILDING #243

ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY
FALL, 2008
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SLU MISSION STATEMENT: “The mission of Saint Louis University is the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God (in Latin: Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam—AMDG) and for the service of humanity. The University seeks excellence in the fulfillment of its corporate purposes of teaching, research and community service. It is dedicated to leadership in the continuing quest for understanding God’s creation, and for the discovery, dissemination and integration of the values, knowledge and skills required to transform society in the spirit of the Gospels. As a Catholic, Jesuit University, the pursuit is motivated by the inspiration of the Judaeo-Christian tradition and is guided by the spiritual and intellectual ideals of the Society of Jesus.”

THEO 521 - Survey of Early Christian History
A broad study of the figures, movements and theological themes in the development of early Christianity from the close of the New Testament to Gregory the Great.

TEXTS FOR FALL, 2008
2. Origen, Exhortation to Martyrdom, Prayer, Selected Works (Paulist Press: 0-8091-2198-0)
5. Pseudo-Dionysius, Complete Works (Paulist Press: 0-8091-2838-1)
EXPECTED ASSIGNMENTS:
I. There are 5 major sections in this course and I shall ask you to write a paper on each of them. You will therefore be expected to write brief essays regarding:

1. Origen by Sep 25
2. Conciliar Christological Developments by Oct 27
3. Saint Augustine by Nov 13
4. The Cappadocians by Dec 4
5. Dionysius the Areopagite by Dec 14 (electronically)

After each reading, you should be able to (i) identify the author, date, and the provenance of each text, (ii) identify where the particular treatise falls within the author’s corpus, (iii) provide the salient points of the discussion, (iv) suggest the historical context which may have prompted this theological or conciliar text, and then (v) spend the rest of the paper arguing for some (fairly) original point that you encountered during your reading.

These papers are much more than personal reflection papers but they are not the usual end of the semester graduate research paper either. They are shorter precisés aimed to give you a comprehensive understanding of the movement of the first few hundred years of Christian reflection. It is therefore expected that you employ the key terms for each author and period. Furthermore, you should show some ongoing mastery of the secondary literature as well; the best resources will be examined in class.

II. Therefore, attached to each essay, I ask that you also include 2 bibliographical references to articles addressing the figure or theme in question. I ask that you simply include these on a separate piece of paper and copy one for each person in the class. If possible, include a non-English reference.

CRITERIA FOR GRADING:
A range = Superior, exceptional, outstanding. The assignment demonstrates critical, informed, and creative theological inquiry that reflects superior understanding of essential theological/historical concepts. This means the student demonstrates depth of insight beyond what is normally expected. Carefully nuanced reasoning and writing, free from material, structural and grammatical error are presupposed in this grade.

B range = Good. The assignment demonstrates ready command of full range of concepts and shows some critical, informed, and creative inquiry that reflects above average understanding of essential theological/historical concepts. This means the student has produced an assignment that is free from material, structural and grammatical errors.

C range = Average. The assignment demonstrates satisfactory ability to describe overall picture and essential concepts. This means the student has completed the assignment in a manner involving no significant errors. Material may not be free from structural and grammatical errors. Nuanced reasoning is not demonstrated.
D range = Below average. The assignment demonstrates reasoning that is neither carefully nuanced nor coherently presented; writing is insufficient in depth of insight and/or use of texts; presentation is not free from material error in structure, spelling and grammar. This means that the student failed to respond adequately to the assignment and its intentions.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT**
“Students are expected to be honest in their academic work. The University reserves the right to penalize any student whose academic conduct is, in its judgment, detrimental to the University. Such conduct shall include cases of plagiarism, collusion, cheating, giving or receiving or offering or soliciting information on examinations, or the use of previously prepared material in examinations or quizzes. Violations should be reported to your course instructor, who will investigate and adjudicate them according to the Policy on Academic Honesty of the College of Arts and Sciences. If the charges are found to be true, the student may be liable for academic or disciplinary probation, suspension or expulsion from the university.”

**THE BEGINNINGS**
26 Aug: Introductions and Procedural Matters
1. *Roots of Christian Mysticism*, ed., Olivier Clément:
   PART ONE: Understanding the Mystery (Sections 1-5: 15-75)

   PART THREE: Approaches to Contemplation (Sections 3-4: 230-307)

   OPENING COMMENTS_____________________________

**THE PERSECUTED**
9 Sep: 1. Origen, *Exhortation to Martyrdom* (all)
2. Henry Chadwick, *The Church in Ancient Society* (65-83; 176-89)

   OPENING COMMENTS_____________________________

+Today we shall meet in Jesuit Hall (3601 Lindell)+

**THE PRAYERFUL**
16 Sep: 1. Origen, *Prayer* (all)
   PART THREE: Approaches to Contemplation (Section 1: 181-212)

   OPENING COMMENTS_____________________________
FROM PHYSICAL TO SPIRITUAL BATTLE
23 Sep: Edward Hardy, Christology of the Later Fathers
        Athanasius, On the Incarnation of the Word (55-110)
        OPENING COMMENTS_____________________________

NICAEA AND THE CONCILIAR TRADITION:
HOMOOUSIOS AND BEYOND
30 Sep Edward Hardy, Christology of the Later Fathers
        The Letter of Arius to Eusebius of Nicomedia
        The Confession of the Arians
        1-3. The Letter of Eusebius concerning Nicaea (→329-40)
        OPENING COMMENTS_____________________________

PERSON AND NATURE AND THE
COUNCILS OF ICONESTANTINOPLE AND EPHESUS
              2. Edward Hardy, Christology of the Later Fathers
                 The Formula of Union (355-58)
                 Summary of the Tome of Constantinople (359-70)

To meet: ______________________
        OPENING COMMENTS_____________________________

BECOMING HUMAN:
LEO AND THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON
14 Oct: Edward Hardy, Christology of the Later Fathers
        1. The Tome of Leo
        2. The Chalcedonian Decree (→ 359-74)
        3. Henry Chadwick, The Church in Ancient Society, 557-611
        OPENING COMMENTS_____________________________

21 Oct: SLU FALL BREAK [no class]
THE BEGINNING OF NARRATIVE THEOLOGY

28 Oct: St. Augustine, *Confessions* 1-9

4 Nov: St. Augustine, *Confessions* 10-13

11 Nov: Henry Chadwick, *The Church in Ancient Society*, 348-78

Edward Hardy, *Christology of the Later Fathers*
Gregory of Nyssa / Gregory Nyssen
2. *An Answer to Ablabius* (256-67)
3. *An Address on Religious Instruction* (270-96)

25 Nov: Edward Hardy, *Christology of the Later Fathers*
Gregory of Nazianzus / Gregory Nazianzen / “Gregory the Theologian”
*The Theological Orations*, “On the Son and Holy Spirit”
§1 and 3-5 (128-35; 160-214)

2 Dec: Pseudo-Dionysius, *Complete Works*
2. *Letter* 7 (266-69)
3. *The Mystical Theology* (135-41)
4. *The Divine Names* §1-3; §7-13 (49-71; 105-131)

9 Dec: Pseudo-Dionysius, *Complete Works*
1. *The Ecclesiastical Hierarchy* (195-259)